



Shire of Derby / West Kimberley

POSITION STATEMENT: MINIMISING HARM FROM ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS: POSITION STATEMENT

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley

About the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley:

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley as a local government, plays multiple roles within our region. Our roles include advocacy, influence, partnering, and facilitating positive community outcomes. Our vision is for Derby/West Kimberley to be 'a place where people want to live, invest, visit, and return to'.

Additionally, the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is part of the Kimberley Regional Group (KRG) and supports the KRG vision 'to maintain and enhance the rich diversity and liveability of the Kimberley for its people and the world'.

This paper is designed to highlight the issues as known to Local Government at the time of writing and the potential pathways that are supported.

Context:

The abuse of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) is prevalent across the Kimberley, with an estimated consumption far higher than national average. This is well recognised as a major health problem, and one that has broader social and economic costs. Addressing the harms associated with AOD, requiring collaboration across all levels of government and a whole of community approach.

Alarming rates of AOD problems continue across the Kimberley, and within the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley, therefore a new, improved approach is required to create sustainable, effective, and localised supports.

Addressing both root causes and symptoms is critical and will require long-term investment into localised 'wrap around services', resourcing, and infrastructure.

Local governments, including the Shire must balance the part that alcohol plays in Australian society with the risks to health, safety, and wellbeing its misuse can pose for the community. Alcohol often accompanies socialising and celebrations, generates employment and revenue, activates streetscapes, and enhances local identity as an entertainment and tourism destination; however, alcohol misuse contributes significantly to health and social issues.

In line with the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley's Strategic Community Plan 2021-2031, the Shire has a role in helping minimise alcohol related harm through collaboration and partnerships, providing strong civic leadership, and encouraging community safety to be a whole-of-community responsibility.

As a Shire we are limited in what we alone can achieve, therefore, to successfully improve community safety, and minimise alcohol related harm we will collaborate with a wide range of partners, to implement effective strategies. We believe enforcement of strict purchasing restrictions, without the strengthening of localised,

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wrap-around supports and services, will not address the issues caused by AOD abuse, and could have further adverse effects on the Region.

Therefore, the Shire is calling for a sustainable, collaborative, and holistic approach to AOD harm minimisation.

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is committed to:

- Working collaboratively with all relevant Local and Regional Health Service Providers, Indigenous Organisations, State and Federal Government Departments, Businesses and Community Organisations to minimise Alcohol and other Drugs harms within our Towns, Communities, and Region.
- Advocating for preventative, rehabilitation, recovery, and wellness services to be established and strengthened in our Region; and
- Acknowledging community led alcohol management initiatives and contributing when and where appropriate.

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley supports the following:

1. Improved localised preventative, rehabilitation and wellness services and infrastructure to build the regions' resilience, including increased housing; and
2. The implementation of considered measures (e.g. Purchasing Restrictions and the Banned Drinker Register) in conjunction with increased support services and infrastructure; and
3. Greater deterrents to address the issue of illegal supply of alcohol (also known as 'sly grogging') and other drugs, including greater resourcing to implement these initiatives.

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